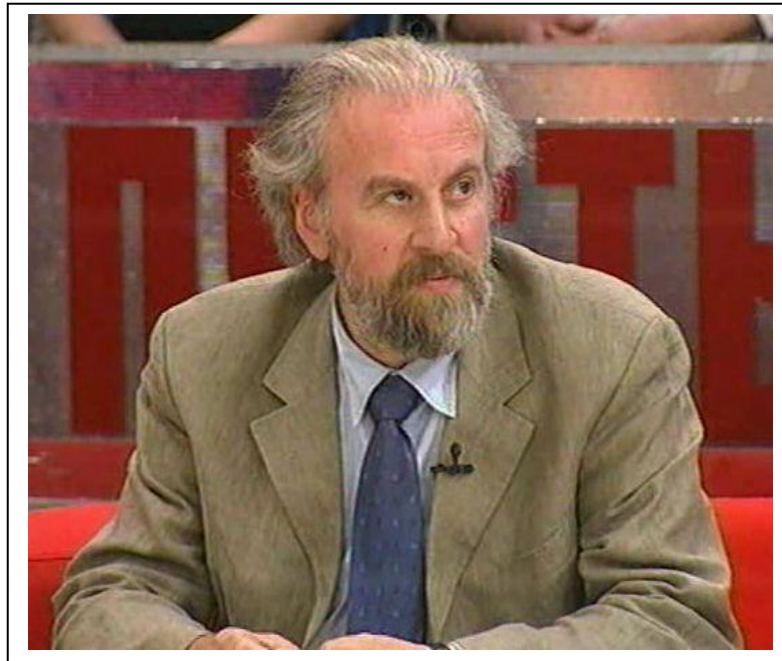


RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM OF ALEXANDER DVORKIN

Research Article

November 2010



Alexander Dvorkin has conducted an energetic campaign aimed at suppressing the freedom of religious associations since 1992, when he, having become a US citizen, came back to Russia after a 15-year absence.

Right after Dvorkin's return, a clergyman of the Russian Orthodox Church offered him the opportunity to take up "the problem of counteracting sects". In 1993, with the blessings of Patriarch Alexy II, Alexander Dvorkin set up the first anti-cult organization that is now called the Russian Association of Centers for Study of Religions and Sects. Since then he has devoted his life to fighting "non-traditional" religious associations.

Directing the activities of his Association, Alexander Dvorkin is the key coordinator of anti-cult activity in Russia and the other countries of the CIS and has a major influence upon Western European countries, being a vice-president of FECRIS (Federation of European Centers for Research and Information on Sects).

This article gives an idea of the real results of Dvorkin's activities. It calls your attention to facts that are not apparent and are often ignored. The subject matter concerns every believer, no matter what religion he or she belongs to.

CONCEPTS OF "SECT" AND "TOTALITARIAN SECT"

The concept relayed by the word "sect" was significantly distorted by Dvorkin, acquiring a connotation of something negative and objectionable. For the last 18 years the word has been transformed in Russia into a stigma that can be placed on any group to make it be viewed by the society as something antisocial.

According to the Ozhegov and Shvedova Dictionary of the Russian Language, a sect is defined as follows:

"A religious school (community) split from some denomination and opposing it."

The Dal Dictionary of the Live Russian Language defines a sect as:

"A brotherhood that has adopted its own separate belief dogmas."

These definitions are very simple. A sect is a group of people alienated from some faith tradition and possessed of its own beliefs. But such a simple definition does not satisfy Dvorkin.

In his book *Sects Studies*, Dvorkin objects to Ozghegov's definition: "This definition is too vague for us; using it, we can't call any group analyzed in the book a sect (at least in Russia), for not one of them split from the Orthodox Church."¹

Dvorkin had to invent his own definition of the word "sect" to extend it into all disfavored groups and impart to the term an alarming and disagreeable connotation. Dvorkin formulates the definition of a "sect" as follows:

"A secluded religious group that positions itself against the main culture-forming religious community (or main communities) of a country or region."²

The meaning has now totally changed. Any religion that is not part of the Russian Orthodox faith is not only a sect, it opposes Russian culture.

Further, in order to impart a more repulsive meaning to the term sect, Dvorkin expanded the term to "totalitarian sect" and defined it thusly:

"Authoritarian ideological groups that manipulate their members and exploit them, often causing them psychological, financial and physical damage. The leaders of totalitarian sects hide their intentions under guises that have religious, politically religious, psychotherapeutic, curative, educational, popular science and other character."³

¹ A.L. Dvorkin "Sects studies. Totalitarian Sects", 3rd edition revised and supplemented. Printing house of the St. Prince Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood, Nizhny Novgorod, 2002, 816 pages

² A.L. Dvorkin "Sects studies. Totalitarian Sects", 3rd edition revised and supplemented. Printing house of the St. Prince Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood, Nizhny Novgorod, 2002, 816 pages

³ A.L. Dvorkin "Sects studies. Totalitarian Sects", 3rd edition revised and supplemented. Printing house of the St. Prince Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood, Nizhny Novgorod, 2002, 816 pages

As observed by Georgy Ereemeev (historian, religion studies scholar at the Moscow Bureau for Human Rights) this definition opens up its own potential for abuse:

"Such a characteristic [of a totalitarian sect] covers anything, from the Stalin's Political Bureau, which up and opened churches or enforced the Lysenko's theories or obligatory GTO [Russian abbreviation for "Ready for Labor and Defense"] fitness standards, to once highly notorious [psychotherapist] Kashpirovsky and Chumak with their assistants and the organizers of financial pyramids, etc. The Orthodox Church itself could be arguably categorized as such."⁴

This new definition imparts a negative characteristic to any group called a "totalitarian sect." Further, using the words "sect" and "totalitarian sect" interchangeably, Dvorkin fuses the two terms and thereby transforms any group labeled a sect into a destructive group.

"Each totalitarian sect seeks world power and power over everybody. This is what is implicit in the nature of a sect." – A.L. Dvorkin⁵

Dvorkin thereafter does not trouble to differentiate between the two: he often labels as a totalitarian sect a group that he earlier just called a sect and vice versa.

Should you now hear the word "sect" and get an impression of some destructive group, secluded criminal association or fraudulent organization, this is the result of Dvorkin's activities.

In 1998 this was noted by the Court Chamber for Information Disputes of the President of Russia:

"The Court Chamber also stresses that there is no concept of a "sect" in the laws of the Russian Federation. At the same time, due to the ideas established in the society the term has an obvious negative connotation and, using it, journalists may hurt the feelings of believers."⁶

ACTUAL CONSEQUENCES

Dvorkin's unfounded accusations against religious organizations create an atmosphere of tension that provokes violent actions against these groups and their members.

It can be stated without any reservation that if it were not for the idea formed in people's minds that new religious movements are "sects" and therefore dangerous, there would not be any physical assaults on adepts of various new religious movements. Peace and placidity would prevail; and individual delinquency on the part of a member of any faith (be it Orthodox or otherwise) would be successfully handled in accordance with the existing laws.

⁴ *Religion and Law Journal*, #1, 2004

⁵ *Take Care: a Sect* movie (part 3), 2003

⁶ Decision #4 (138) of 12 February 1998

Yet, Dvorkin has been working full time for 18 years to generate hostility against members of new religious movements. It is his sole occupation. An examination of a single year of his efforts illustrates this.

16-18 March 2009, Astana, Kazakhstan

Dvorkin held meetings and delivered lectures on sects before state and municipal officials of Kazakhstan, scientists, professors and teachers of several universities. He spoke on the national Khabar TV Channel where he said that "sects" use conscience manipulation techniques, that "Scientology is one of the cruelest international totalitarian sects", that every fourth member of the New Life sect committed suicide, and that every sect sought to seize power in the country. The purpose of Dvorkin's trip was stated as follows: "...calling the attention of the public to the dissemination and activation of non-traditional religious associations, new forms of religion and other cults of Eastern and Western type and to the necessity of measures to check the activity of destructive religious organizations in Kazakhstan."

<http://www.minjust.kz/ru/node/8836>

<http://www.zakon.kz/engine/print.php?page=1&newsid=135733>

9 April 2009, interview to *Radonezh* radio station

Dvorkin advanced the idea that there is a conflict between traditional religions and sects.

http://www.religare.ru/2_64095_1_21.html

2 May 2009, Moscow

Dvorkin met with representatives of the American Orthodox Church. "During the meeting the head of the American Orthodox Church was informed about the activity of Dvorkin's Association in opposing the threats posed by totalitarian sects."

<http://iriney.ru/document/100.htm>

15-17 May 2009, St. Petersburg, St. Petersburg State University, Law Faculty

Participation and speech of Dvorkin at an annual conference of FECRIS called *Totalitarian Sects and the Human Right for Secure Life*. The topic of Dvorkin's report was *Destructive Cults and Human Rights*. The conference was attended by Alexey Velichko, Deputy Minister of Ministry of Justice and Sergey Milushkin, the then head of the Department for Noncommercial Organizations. Minister of Justice Konovalov sent his greeting and later appeared in person. Dvorkin was elected vice-president of FECRIS at this conference. The conference allowed anti-cult activists to spill a lot of black propaganda in mass media and coordinate efforts of European anti-cultists.

http://www.ansobor.ru/news.php?news_id=355

18 May 2009, St. Petersburg, St. Petersburg State University, Law Faculty

Dvorkin participated in the II Inter-Orthodox Consultation on Opposing Totalitarian Sectarianism.

"All the participants of the consultation agreed on the vital necessity to exchange the current information obtained in monitoring the destructive activity of sects in the country, as well as sectarian "missionary" migration, wherein the leader of a sect went outside the original country in his recruitment activity."

<http://iriney.ru/sects/theory/025.htm>

26 May 2009, Cherepovets City

Dvorkin had a meeting with a title *Contemporary Non-Traditional Religions* with students of Cherepovets State University. During the talk the audience was shown the film *Common Stories* telling on the sects that are most widespread in Russia.

"In Cherepovets A. Dvorkin participated in the shooting of a series of TV shows with anti-sect topics for the Orthodox TV *Sunday School* show broadcast on the Province city TV channel, as well as of the youth *We Are Different* TV program. In the evening of the same day a more open meeting for everybody was held in the Cherepovets Home of Music. During the meeting professor Dvorkin told about the differences between the religions that are traditional and not traditional for Russia, about the major totalitarian sects acting in the country..."

<http://www.pravoslavie-nord.ru/print.html?pid=1179>

28 May 2009 Vologda City, Savior-Prilutsky Monastery

Dvorkin spoke before the audience and gave an interview for the website of the Vologda eparchy.

Among other things he said, "Modern totalitarian sects are a socially dangerous manifestation that leaves behind a trail of disrupted human lives, disrupted families...", "and, speaking about New Pentecostals, to my mind, they are one of the most awful dangers of the contemporary world", ... "sects have long since become a political factor that is used primarily in the external policy of the United States of America."

<http://panteleimon.info/index.php?newsid=614>

2 June 2009, Russia TV channel, *Special Correspondent – Catcher of Souls* TV show

Dvorkin told on the national TV channel on fraudulent activities of "sects", said that each sect seeks only money and power and that sects actually deliver not the thing that they promise.

23 June 2009, Russia TV channel, *Good Morning, Russia!* TV show

Dvorkin answered the questions of hosts telling about the dangers of sects and on how not to wind up in one.

26 August 2009, Chelyabinsk City

Dvorkin commented for Dostup New Agency calling Mormons an international business corporation that collaborates with the CIA. He also said, "The Mormons pose danger at the level of the State, as well as at the level of personality, as their rites influence minds destructively," and, "As for "New Life", it is one of New Pentecostal sects, which is notorious for its destructive activity."

http://www.dostup1.ru/comment/comment_8880.html

30 September – 2 October 2009, Alchevsk City, Lugansk City, Ukraine

Dvorkin held a meeting entitled *On New Religious Movements* with citizens of Alchevsk City in the House of Culture of Metallurgists. The next day he spoke before teachers and students of the Donetsk Basin State Technical University on the same subject matter, representing it as a "dangerous social manifestation". He visited Lugansk City with the same purpose, where he, beside everything else, took part in an online conference and gave an interview to regional TV channels. In the interview he told about "totalitarian sects", which are characterized by "lies during recruitment, manipulations of the conscience of their adepts, their exploitation, and reglamentation of all aspects of their

lives... Scientology, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Hare Krishna, New Pentecostals (God's Embassy, Alive Faith, New Generation, etc.), adepts of Anastasia, Vissarion, Ivanov, Sahaja Yoga, Brahma Kumaris, Falun Gong can be quoted as examples of totalitarian sects."

<http://www.alchevsk-city.com/article.php?option=2&id=2354>

9 October 2009, NTV channel, *Emergency, Investigation: Jehovah's Witnesses* show
Before the whole country Dvorkin in his interview to NTV parallels Jehovah's Witnesses with drug dealers and calls them "slaves". Thereafter the documentary was repeatedly used as a motive for violence against Jehovah's Witnesses.

17-18 October 2009, Varna City, Bulgaria

International seminar *Educational Establishments as a Target for Sectarian Activity* was held in the Bulgarian Center for Studies of New Religious Movements. Dvorkin delivered a report *Children as Hostages of Totalitarian Sects*. The report reads: "As children grow, they are perceived as a target for exploitation: as a workforce, as a subject of sexual advances, or as helpless victims for the frustrated and resentful sect members to vent their hatred toward the rest of the world."

<http://iriney.ru/sects/theory/028.htm>

20 November 2009, Kiev, Ukraine

Dvorkin gave an interview to the Religion Information Service of Ukraine, in which he insults religion studies scholars and human rights activists, as they work for "sects".

http://risu.org.ua/ru/index/expert_thought/interview/33106/

21 January 2010, Moscow, Orthodox St. Tikhon Humanitarian University⁷

During the *Urgent Problems of the Orthodox Sects Studies* round table Dvorkin gave a report, saying, "The topics brought up at the round table highlighted once more the great significance... totalitarian sectarianism has from the viewpoint of major social threats prevention."

<http://iriney.ru/sects/theory/031.htm>

26 January 2010, *Russia Today* TV Channel

In his interview Dvorkin says that sects are widespread in Russia and tells about his draft law on missionary activity, which would forbid missionary activity in the territory of another religious organization, as well as in hospitals and the army.

28 January 2010, Moscow

Dvorkin spoke at the conference *Totalitarian Sects: Occultism, Distortions of Orthodoxy* in the proceedings of the 17th International Christmas Educational Readings. He gave an overall review of the Russian society's trend "to oppose dangerous cults". Besides other things he said, "The conference participants came to the general conclusion on a great urgency of the discussed topics and on the necessity of further informing Russian public on the dangers of totalitarian sects and occult schools and practices and conducting more intense activities for prevention of an increase in the quantity of totalitarian sectarianism victims."

<http://iriney.ru/sects/theory/032.htm>

⁷ The University where Dvorkin holds the chair of "sect studies."

10 March 2010, Novosibirsk City

Dvorkin gave an interview to the *Slovo* Regional Legislature radio, gave a lecture at the theological seminary, took part in a video conference of the Novosibirsk Regional Department of Interior Affairs, gave a lecture *Totalitarian Sects as a Threat to National Security* before the officers of the Center for Counteraction of Extremism of the Novosibirsk Regional Department of Interior Affairs (so called Center "E") and before the students of the institute of the FSB of Russia. For two days Alexander Dvorkin lectured for students of three Novosibirsk higher education establishments, those of the Humanitarian Institute, Medical University and Architecture and Construction University. In the meantime professor answered reporters' questions.

http://ansobor.ru/news.php?news_id=867

22 March 2010, Lensk town (Republic of Yakutia)

Dvorkin conducted a seminar and consultation on *the Problems and Prospects of Realization of State Policy in the Sphere of Collaboration with Religious Associations at the Municipal Level*. The participants were the head of the municipality of Lensk District, heads of municipalities comprising the District, clergymen, representatives of the Department of Interior Affairs, the Ministry of Emergencies, the central hospital of the district and other interested parties.

During the consultations with the District Administration, the "painfully touching speech of Alexander Dvorkin on harmful effects of sects on children hardly left the listeners of the seminar indifferent."

<http://www.1sn.ru/38826.html>

24 March 2010, Mirny City (Yakutia)

During his meeting with the public Alexander Dvorkin dwelt on the topic "The Sect and Children." He gave facts on the destructive sects collected all over the world. He told about such organizations as the Power of Faith, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Society for the Consciousness of Krishna, the Family, and Scientology. Alexander Dvorkin stressed that, "We all need knowledge on new sects, New Pentecostal sects, as their adepts recruit failed university enrollees, and people on vacation, they have a whole battery of psychological influence, especially on the unstable minds of adolescents and youths..." Alexander Dvorkin noted that population's initiative should be present in fighting sects to force local authorities to react quickly to them.

http://www.admmirny.ru/news/03_2010.htm

29 March 2010, Aykhal settlement (Yakutia)

Dvorkin met with the public, students of vocational school #30, schoolchildren, as well as their parents and school teachers. He told about dangers of "sects" and that they are very numerous in Russia.

<http://aykhal.su/topic.php?id=357>

14 April 2010, Moscow, Rosbalt Information Agency

Pchelintsev, "What organizations of today's Russia are classified as totalitarian sects?"

A woman (supplementing the question), "...Well, Jehovah's Witnesses we have heard of them. And who else?"

Dvorkin, "Scientology, the Society for the Consciousness of Krishna, various New Pentecostal groups, Mormons."

<http://www.bogoslov.ru/text/734716/index.html>

22 April 2010, Moscow, an interview to K2K NEWS information and analysis Internet portal. Dvorkin, "I think that any materials by Ron Hubbard are extremist one and pose danger... This organization poses a serious social threat."

http://www.k2kapital.com/news/comments/206742/?print=Y&ELEMENT_ID=206742

4-10 May 2010, Erevan, Armenia

During his visit professor A.L. Dvorkin lectured before the clergymen of the Armavir eparchy, students of the Gevorkyan Theological Academy and St. Echmiadzin Brotherhood, students of the Erevan State University, teachers and headmasters of the Echmiadzin Region and Erevan, students of the Gavarsky State University, Sevan Theological Seminary, and youth communities of Erevan City. He also gave an interview to the Shogakat TV Channel. The lectures and talks were about various sect studies problems, both of particular "sects" such as New Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Hare Krishna, commercial cults, etc., and general questions of sect studies and Church history.

http://ansobor.ru/news.php?news_id=984&print=1

16 May 2010, Russia 1 TV Channel, *Special Correspondent* TV show

Dvorkin says to all Russia that sects have to be fought at the government level and that the literature of sects has to be declared extremist. He also stated that more dangerous than Satanists ("who are an obvious evil") are Scientology, Mormons, Hare Krishna, New Pentecostals, Falun Gong, and Jehovahists, who "conceal evil under the guise of good."

21 May 2010, Moscow, an interview to Vzglyad newspaper

Dvorkin gave an interview on healer Grabovoy, but at the end he noted that "totalitarian sects involve people through deceit."

<http://www.vz.ru/society/2010/5/21/404234.print.html>

24 May 2010, NTV Channel, *Honest Monday* TV show

Dvorkin speaks together with Andrey Kuraev. He urges people to get organized and oppose the threat of sects. He expresses his hope that the court decisions declaring the literature of Jehovah's Witnesses and Scientologists to be extremist will keep in force.

26-29 June 2010, Veria, Greece

Dvorkin participated in an international scientific symposium, where he gave a speech entitled "New Pentecostals, an alternative Christianity for the "New Age". All the present agreed unanimously that New Pentecostals are one of the most serious dangers for the Church and society.

<http://iriney.ru/sects/theory/044.htm>

8 July 2010, 1st TV Channel, *Circuit – Sects in Schools* TV show

Dvorkin and his lawyer Alexander Karelov participate in the show. Dvorkin said that Scientology was a secret service that used blackmail for extorting money, and told other black propaganda on Scientology. Alexander Karelov urged to volunteer complaints against Scientologists to the chapters of the department for counteraction of extremism.

This is **only for one year and is only the public side of his activities.**

It is not hard to imagine how much hatred towards various religious movements the public has to face; what hysteria that creates and what consequences that may entail. Here are **several** of about **five hundred incidents** that occurred over the course of a year and a half:

15 January 2009, Zelenograd District of Moscow

At 6:20 a.m. an act of vandalism was committed against the Prayer Home of the Evangelic Baptist Christians. Unknown people broke five windows of the rehearsal hall. Lumps of frozen soil and bottles were thrown at the windows.

<http://baptist.org.ru/news/broadcast/1562/>

19 March 2009, Stavropol City

The director of a kindergarten prohibited children of Pentecostals to speak about their faith, explained to them that they are "sectarians" and took them out from the group before the eyes of the other children. The administration of the kindergarten also distributed materials where Pentecostals were called "a totalitarian sect".

<http://jesuslove.ru/news/1989-prokuratura-stavropolskogo-kрая-otkazyaetsya.html>

20 May 2009, Losevo village (Voronezh Region)

A group of disseminators of the Holy Word of Evangelical Baptist Christians preached about Christ in the market. They sang hymns and presented treatises and Christian literature to all those who desired it. A police woman in civilian clothes and several men approached them. She warned, "Go away, otherwise you will be beaten." When after the end of the service the friends came back to their cars, a group of young men was waiting for them. The leader of the group shouted, "Who allowed you to come to my village? Who allowed you to spoil my people?" He demanded that the senior come over. He threatened to kill everybody right away and bury them. While the brother in charge was talking to him, everybody else was praying. There was no physical violence. A bit later the same young men came to Brother Alexander's house and wanted to take him away, but he went out of the house to see them together with his wife, children and mother. Because he refused to go with them, they promised to burn him and all his family. At night on May 21 - 22 Brother Alexander's car was set on fire.

<http://iucecb.com/news/20090523-2153>

12 September 2009, Zvenigorod town (Moscow Region)

Jehovah's Witnesses were assaulted by an unknown man, who came over and having established they were Jehovah's Witnesses told them, "Go away from the town! We have already burnt your hall and you continue to walk here. Pull out, you'd better not be seen by me again, or else!" Then the man hit a Jehovah's Witness in the face and drove away.

<http://www.jw-russia.org>

15 September 2009, Roshchino settlement (Leningrad Region)

After Russia TV Channel's report on a decision of the Rostov Region Court concerning the Jehovah's Witnesses, a man beat an elderly woman, who was a Jehovah's Witness, for talking with other people about the Bible. His motive was that the religion is prohibited. The man said, "Cossacks will come from Rostov and kill you off here."

<http://www.jw-russia.org>

20 September 2009

In a letter of 36 autonomous Exodus churches and communities (Pentecostals) to President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev and the Prosecutor General the church representatives complained as follows: "Parishioners of officially registered religious organizations of Churches of Evangelic Christians, autonomous Exodus Churches of Taganrog, Kamensk-Shakhtinsky, Novoshakhtinsk, Novochoerkassk, Shakhty, Donetsk of the Rostov Region and St. Petersburg have been called on their personal mobile numbers, visited by alleged policemen and asked various questions on the citizens' private lives ... Meanwhile they do not conceal their negative attitude to the religious organizations, insult and call them 'sectarians'."

<http://www.sclj.ru/news/detail.php?ID=2632>

26 September 2009, Vladivostok City

A Baptist Prayer House was raided. Unknown people penetrated inside the Church fence and broke a plastic window casement with a large stone and then threw two Molotov cocktails at the hole.

<http://www.sova-center.ru/religion/news/extremism/murders-violence/2009/09/d16963/>

October 2009, Shorokhovo village (Tyumen Region)

A private house of an old couple of Jehovah's Witnesses was attacked. At 10 p.m. a window was broken with thrown stones. When the husband went out to see who had done it, he found a big white poster of the local Orthodox church on his gate.

<http://www.jw-russia.org>

19 October 2009, Chemodanovka village (Penza Region)

A child, whose parents were Jehovah's Witnesses, was assaulted at school. It happened after three slanderous TV shows about Jehovah's Witnesses on local television. A classmate said, "You are a sect member" and hit the victim on his nose.

<http://www.jw-russia.org>

24 October 2009, Shchedrovka village (Rostov Region)

The head of a rehabilitation center prohibited two elderly Jehovah's Witnesses who lived in it to leave the center to attend religious services under the threat of being expelled. It happened after an article in Chertkovskiye Vesti newspaper circulating in the district and the *Emergency, Investigation: Jehovah's Witnesses show* on NTV Channel.

<http://www.jw-russia.org>

10 November 2009, Zainsk town (the Republic of Tatarstan)

The head of the local FSB visited the Savings Bank of the Russian Federation. In the office of the managing director, in the presence of bank's employees, a recording of *Emergency, Investigation: Jehovah's Witnesses show* was played. Then the head of FSB told said that the show would be played in other organizations of the town with the purpose of prohibiting Jehovah's Witnesses in Zainsk town and in all the Republic of Tatarstan.

<http://www.jw-russia.org>

3 December 2009, Kataysk town (Kurgan Region)

Two Jehovah's Witnesses were detained during their missionary activities by policemen and brought to the police station. Their passport data was copied there citing a task of compiling a database of Jehovah's Witnesses in Kurgan. They photographed and took the fingerprints of the detained people without their consent. The policemen behaved

rudely, threatened to use handcuffs, and used various insulting words such as "sectarians," "anti-Christ," and "Satanists."

<http://www.jw-russia.org>

8 December 2009, Tambov City

Two women, who were Jehovah's Witnesses, came to see a person who had expressed his desire to learn more about the Bible, but not finding him at home decided to wait for him. An unknown man approached them and on learning the purpose of their visit started to shout to his neighbor that she should call the police. At the same time he held the believers obstructing the exit. One of the Jehovah's Witnesses tried to talk to him, but he hit her on her head. She was struck in the place where her skull was already fractured. As a result she fell and temporarily lost consciousness. The policemen who arrived later brought the women to the police station, where they questioned them thrice and wrote down their passport data twice and then let them go home.

<http://www.jw-russia.org>

22 December 2009, Novorossiysk City (Krasnodar Territory)

Two Jehovah's Witnesses were sharing their convictions with other people. At the time a young man assaulted them on introducing himself as a policeman. He was insulting the women and then hit them in their bellies, which made them fall on the floor. The man proceeded to kick them and threaten. He took away the bag of one of them and threatened to burn her passport.

<http://www.jw-russia.org>

29 January 2010, Baymak settlement (the Republic of Bashkortostan)

Two Jehovah's Witnesses came to an acquaintance of theirs to talk about the Bible. The young man was not at home. Suddenly a man sprung out of the flat and without a single question pushed one of the women downstairs. Then the man kicked the other woman on her back so hard that she fell, rolled down the stairs and got strongly hurt. During the assault the man shouted and continued to beat his victims up to the exit from the hall. At the police station where they brought their complaints they were insulted, humiliated, bullied and denied filing of their complaints. Then the women filed complaints in the Ministry of the Interior Affairs of the Republic of Bashkortostan and in the Prosecutor's Office. On 14 February at 5.20 a.m. the man came to the home of the Jehovah's Witnesses. He slammed at the door and threatened to make short work of them.

<http://www.jw-russia.org>

4 June 2010, Rybinsk City

A Krishna believer noticed three guys near a department store. When the Krishna believer held out a book to one of them, he unexpectedly struck him in his face making him fall on the ground. When the Krishna believer stood up and asked for the book back, the hooligan hit him a second time and ran away.

<http://www.rosbalt.ru/2010/06/04/742692.html>

21 June 2010, Cherkessk City

A 26-year old man threw two four-liter jerry cans with Molotov cocktail into a window of the New Life Evangelic Baptist Christian Church setting it on fire.

<http://www.interfax.ru/society/news.asp?id=159965>

4 August 2010, Losino-Petrovsky town (Moscow Region)

Officers of the Investigation Committee, FSB and Anti-Extremist Center accompanied by a fast response special detachment of police broke into a Scientology center. In their

"investigation actions" they broke several windows; broke the leg of a Scientologist; jeered at Scientology writings, thrust a screwdriver into a copy of an L. Ron Hubbard lecture recording, and insulted members of the Center using black propaganda from the mass media.

<http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=news&id=79641&type=view>

Every day, several similar instances of religious intolerance occurred. While Dvorkin is rising to the federal level disseminating religious hatred far and wide, this statistics is continuing to grow and involve other CIS countries.

"Knowing Alexander Dvorkin as a fierce rival of Evangelic Christian Churches, who uses untruthful and evidently distorted information, I can suppose that his activity will create unnecessary and harmful tension in the society of Ukraine. I'd rather it did not become the reason of religious strife." – Alexander Anfinogenov (director of Word of Life media center)⁸

Breeding hatred is his job, full time.

If you as a believer of a religion not affiliated with the Moscow Patriarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church have to confront unfriendliness and insults, black propaganda in press, denials of registration as a religious organization, denials of premises, vandalism, and many other things, don't wonder where all this comes from. It is being created on purpose, 24 hours a day. It is not a public opinion on you; it's an opinion of several people who deem it their duty to communicate it to the society in general.

DVORKIN AND RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM

Needless to say that there is no direct relation between Dvorkin and the idea of religious extremism; him and, for instance, denial of construction of a mosque in Moscow; him and the court declaration that materials of Jehovah's Witnesses and Scientologists have extremist character; or even him and the 1997 law that made registration for many religious organizations virtually impossible because of the 15 quarantine period.

"It is hard to overestimate the significance of the victory, as it was obtained just before the adoption of the new Federal Law On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations... But without any doubt the defeat of the defenders of sects made MPs to vote for the law in the final run and the president to sign it, though not immediately." – From the book⁹ by Dvorkin on Dvorkin's 1997 case v. G.P. Yakunin

The Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations gives the reasons for a ban of the activity of a religious organization or group. Here are some of them,

"The breach of public security and public order";

"Acts aimed at the performance of an extremist activity";

⁸ <http://news.invictory.org/issue25743.html>

⁹ A.L. Dvorkin *Teachers and Lessons. Memories, Stories, Speculations.* – Nizhny Novgorod, Khristianskaya Biblioteka (Christian Library) Publishing House, 2009, 384 p.

"Forcing to break the family";

"Encroachments on the personality, rights and freedoms of citizens";

"Infliction... of damage established under the law to morals, health of citizens, including the use in connection with their religious activity of narcotic drugs and psychotherapeutic agents, hypnosis, the commission of acts of perversion and other unlawful actions";

"Inducement to suicide and refusal for reasons of religion to give medical aid to persons in a state endangering their life and health"; and

"Forcing members and followers of religious associations and other persons to alienate their property in favor of religious associations".

Dvorkin blames religious organizations in practically all the above things. However none of them was outlawed in Russia by a due court decision based on the above point, which again confirms the groundlessness of Dvorkin's statements. This is valid for the provisions against extremist activity, which will be covered below.

Dvorkin does not think that the above reasons for a religious organization ban listed in the law are enough. Therefore it confirms the fact that "sects" actually are not involved in "forcing to break the family" or in "encroachments on the personality, rights and freedoms of citizens", and so on. Therefore it would be difficult to eliminate sects with the help of the law.

"It is necessary to extend the fraud articles of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation to introduce such articles as "psychological violence" and "manipulation of conscience", as it was done in France. We also suggest that special bodies be established both at federal and regional levels. They must collaborate with victims of sects and the public organizations that deal with that and collect information on sects. When there is enough data accumulated, a law draft on totalitarian sectarianism should be written up. Up until now all the struggle with sects has been conducted by public efforts and the Russian Orthodox Church. However now it is not enough already, more dramatic measures are needed." – A.L. Dvorkin¹⁰

As for religious extremism, till 2008 neither Jehovah's Witnesses, or Falun Gong, or Scientologists, or Muslims could be limited in their activity because of that, as the definition of extremism did not relate to them. However, after the revision of the Law on Counteraction of Extremist Activities in 2006 the definition of "extremism" was fully changed. Here is example of one of the types of the extremist activity per the old definition:

"The excitation of racial, national or religious strife, and also social hatred associated with violence or calls for violence".

But in the revised Law the sentence "associated with violence or calls for violence" disappeared and extremism activity is defined as such:

"The excitation of racial, national or religious strife, and also social hatred".

The meaning is totally changed. As of now, after the introduction of such radical amendments in the Law, the new definition of extremist activity might be applied practically to any religious (and not only religious) organization, which is what is happening now. Of course, that is what Dvorkin lacked for so long time: he could not prove the crimes of "sects",

¹⁰ Interview to *Gudok* newspaper, issue 123 of 16 July 2008.

as it is hard to prove nonexistent things. But Dvorkin did not fail to point out the necessity of such amendments that would make such proving redundant.

"It's strange that Russia still does not have a legal definition of "totalitarian sects"... MP Alexander Chuev has proposed a law draft On Traditional Religious Organizations. We have been talking about it for a long time, but I see serious shortcomings in the law draft. New Pentecostal sects, which are now one of the most serious threats to personality and society, will receive the status of a traditional confession nearly automatically. It means the evil will spread without check." – A.L. Dvorkin (from the interview to Vladivostok newspaper, 2002)¹¹

Now that the amendments to the law on extremism are introduced and it is possible to accuse any disfavored religious organization of extremism, it might as well be expected that Dvorkin would change his term repertoire from "totalitarian sect" for "extremist sect". Now there is a good possibility to pronounce an organization an extremist one because it conducts "the propaganda of the exclusiveness, superiority or deficiency of individuals on the basis of their... religious... identity" or commits "the violation of the rights, freedoms... of man... on the basis of their... religious... identity."¹²

"Something is nonetheless changing. Something is changing. Court proceedings against Jehovahists are under way and 52 titles of their literature have been declared extremist. 17 Scientology organizations were closed in the country last year, and the Surgut Court has declared Scientology literature to be extremist one, a large list of it at least. I don't know whether the decision will endure in a senior court." – A.L. Dvorkin¹³

Now, for instance, it was not very hard to declare Scientology literature to have extremist character: it was necessary only to appoint Evgeny Volkov (a good acquaintance of Dvorkin) an expert, who did not even have to study the materials to give an "expertise" to the effect that the materials have extremist character, for the expert opinion was given in an extremely short time. The court accepted the "expertise" and, possibly, put the Scientology literature before them (as the representatives from Scientology organizations weren't even summoned to court) and declared it to be extremist one. Thus the federal list of extremist materials on the website of the Ministry of Justice was supplemented with 28 titles. Now it is a guide to action for law enforcement bodies, who, without any slightest doubt about the court decision, initiate inspections, take Scientology literature out of libraries and seal up stores. That the court decision has not come into force does not matter to them. However strange it may be, to the Ministry of Justice either. This is largely explained by the fact that the most part of the information on the religious organizations they know from Dvorkin himself, who is travelling in the country and lecturing before officers of departments for counteraction of extremism and FSB cadets.¹⁴

"Last year in our country... 54 titles of Jehovahist literature were declared extremist and introduced into the federal list of extremist materials. This year already Surgut Court declared Scientology materials extremist; court proceedings aimed at declaring Falun Gong an extremist organization is under way in the Krasnodar Territory, so some... this is just a beginning... but one correct algorithm is being worked out: if you declare the literature of a sect to be extremist materials, it's not just in the region, it's included into the federal list of extremist materials. Should you close one chapter, Scientologists, they

¹¹ http://www.patriotica.ru/religion/dvorkin_krest.html

¹² Federal Law #114-1 "On Counteraction of Extremist Activities" (29 April 2008)

¹³ NTV Channel, Good Monday show, May 2010.

¹⁴ http://www.ansobor.ru/news.php?news_id=867

will open 20 with other names; should you declare all literature to be extremist one, they have no escape."- A.L. Dvorkin¹⁵

Such is the attitude of the chair of "expert" council of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation, who should have preserved an independent and unbiased stance at least in public. When that was reported to V.A. Titov, the head of the department for noncommercial organizations of the Ministry of Justice, he said at once that it was Dvorkin's personal opinion, that he was not even an official and whatever person their structure could collaborate with. In short, they quickly disinherited Dvorkin. At the same time they refused to take out the materials from the extremist literature list even after the resolution on cancelling the Surgut Court decision was produced to them.

The degree of involvement of Dvorkin in the issues of the Ministry of Justice can be demonstrated by the following fact: the Surgut Court brought its decision on Scientology materials on 26 March 2010; but the Church of Scientology was not officially informed about it neither before or after the proceedings and learnt about it from media and the interview Dvorkin gave on 22 April, wherein he said,

"I think that any materials by Ron Hubbard are extremist ones and pose danger... The Russian court paid attention to the basis, the writings by Hubbard himself. And without materials the sect, whatever name it will have, won't be able to act." – A.L. Dvorkin¹⁶

For some reason the authorities deemed it necessary to inform Dvorkin, not the defendant. Moreover, the Scientology materials were added into the federal list of the Ministry of Justice as late as on 30 June 2010; but on 17 June 2010 Dvorkin writes in one of his expert opinions,

"It should be also added that in April 2010 Surgut City Court on petition of law enforcement bodies declared... a series of lectures by Ron Hubbard printed in 28 booklets to be extremist ones and **introduced them into the federal list of extremist materials** prohibited for distribution in the territory of Russia." – A.L. Dvorkin¹⁷

Not only the materials were not in the list yet, but also the decision of the Surgut Court was appealed against and had not come into force. But the chair of the "expert" council for some reason was so sure that the materials would wind up in the list that he wrote about it beforehand.

One can predict what will be after the biased experts have failed and Falun Gong and the Church of Scientology and Jehovah's Witnesses have succeeded in getting exclusion of their literature from the list.

Dvorkin, "There is a special inter-ministerial commission for the struggle against sectarian abuse in France; it was called earlier "for struggle against sects"... It's headed by an official bearing minister's rank who reports directly to the Prime Minister."

Hostess: "You suggest that such post be introduced in Russia?"

Dvorkin, "Sure, it is necessary to introduce such a post, such a commission; the parliament has to deal with that... There is also a high official who deals with that in Belgium, in a whole series of European countries. It's high time we had too. And a law should be passed as in France; liability for manipulation of conscience, for psychological violence should be introduced."¹⁸

¹⁵ Russia 1 TV Channel, *Special Correspondent show, Plays with the Devil* story, May 2010

¹⁶ http://www.k-istine.ru/sects/scientology/scientology_k2k.htm

¹⁷ http://www.iriney.ru/document/expertiza_bas_press.doc

¹⁸ 1 TV Channel, *Special Correspondent show, Plays with the Devil* story, May 2010

EXTREMIST STATEMENTS

Those who are interested in the matter of the application of anti-extremist laws should have noticed that it is applied to religious organizations selectively and almost always without any grounds. While the country sees real crimes related to national and religious hatred and actual xenophobia manifestations, the State for some reason decides to spend its time and money on Hare Krishna, Baptists and Jehovah's Witnesses. It's time due attention were paid to those who actually espoused extremism.

"The excitation of racial, national or religious strife, and also social hatred".

– The Federal Law on Counteraction of Extremist Activities

"The main thing to remember is that Mormons are not Christians, their organization has nothing to do with Christianity. It's a coarsely occult neo-Pagan sect with fairly serious totalitarian tendencies, and, getting into it, a person splits himself not only from his own people, history and culture, not only from the world Christian heritage, but from Christ Himself and His Church as well." – A.L. Dvorkin ¹⁹

"Thus, Falun Gong is a strict totalitarian sect, whose members its leader uses in his vendetta against the government of China and who, in his turn, is used by American secret services for their external policy purposes." – A.L. Dvorkin ²⁰

"Actions aimed at...inferiority of individuals by reason of their attitude to religion..., if these acts have been committed in public or with the use of mass media."

– Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, article 282.

"Sectarrians, they do not work, they do not benefit the society, they have no such intention. They seek only to acquire as much as possible for their sect. What Moonies, or Hare Krishna, or Scientologists can? They can only beg in the streets, only sell some unrealistic programs that allegedly bring well-being. And what for? For wringing, wringing and wringing money out of the State and people, wringing out forces, wringing out health, wringing out labor..." – A.L. Dvorkin ²¹.

"Scientology is a cult of losers." – A.L. Dvorkin ²²

"The propaganda of ... deficiency of individuals on the basis of their ... religious or linguistic identity or of their attitude to religion"

– The Federal Law on Counteraction of Extremist Activities

¹⁹ A.L. Dvorkin "Sects studies. Totalitarian Sects", 3rd edition revised and supplemented. Printing house of the St. Prince Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood, Nizhny Novgorod, 2002, 816 pages

²⁰ Report *Destructive Sect Falun Gong: the Science of Political Manipulations* by A.L. Dvorkin at the XVI International Christmas Educational Readings, 30 January 2008 (<http://www.iriney.ru/sects/falun/news008.htm>)

²¹ Lectures in Yekaterinburg, 1996 (taken from the website <http://files.tvspas.ru/Audio>)

²² Lectures in Yekaterinburg, 2007 (taken from the website <http://files.tvspas.ru/Audio>)

"As New Pentecostals are the largest sectarian movement in our country (as in all the post-Soviet area too), Ryakhovsky can be called the main sectarian of Russia."
– A.L. Dvorkin²³

"The propaganda or agitation instigating social, racial, national or religious hatred and strife shall not be allowed. The propaganda of social, racial, national, religious or linguistic supremacy shall be banned."

– Constitution of the Russian Federation, article 29.

"... A normal person is brought up with the use of sublime samples of human spirit. A person brought up just within traditional religion and cultural manifestations, within also a culture-forming religion (traditional one)... It is clear that some helpless Scientology blah-blah, or some pseudo-Hinduism of Hare Krishna, or the White Brotherhood too (their names are legion) – all these cannot be assimilated by the person." – A.L. Dvorkin²⁴

Question: "... Is there any formula how to fight this debauchery [meaning sects]?"

Dvorkin: "I don't know, I think there is no any special formula. There's just – to tell the truth about them first of all. This is what is necessary. And to warn people... It's on the one hand. On the other hand, to bring up children in the Orthodox Faith. Because the Orthodox Faith is the original, a traditional religion is the original; and a sect is a



"A sect is always something tawdry, spiritual bad taste." – A.L. Dvorkin

fake, something forged, something tawdry." – A.L. Dvorkin²⁵

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom ... either alone or in community with others ... to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

– Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 18.

"Moscow organization of the Jehovah's Witnesses was disbanded in Moscow. It does not mean they are prohibited, just the organization was disbanded. [...] There has been a legal ban, but it did not make Jehovah's Witnesses disappear. Now it is more difficult for them to work. All to the better, it's fair. They should have difficulties in work." – A.L. Dvorkin²⁶

²³ <http://iriney.ru/sects/50/news167.htm>, January 2010

²⁴ Lectures in Yekaterinburg, 2007 (taken from the website <http://files.tvspas.ru/Audio>)

²⁵ Lectures in Yekaterinburg, 2007 (taken from the website <http://files.tvspas.ru/Audio>)

²⁶ Lectures in Yekaterinburg, 2007 (taken from the website <http://files.tvspas.ru/Audio>)

“Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom ... either alone or in community with others ... to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.”

– European Convention on Human Rights, article 9.

“Such wild outburst of activities of totalitarian sects in our country is to a great degree necessitated by utter absence of religious education. And therefore, on the one hand, people should be warned of dangers of sectarianism and told about particular sects, but, on the other hand, a religious education program should be introduced at school. It's a necessary thing; it's a sort of development of spiritual taste.” – A.L. Dvorkin²⁷

These are samples of real extremist statements. You will hardly find at least a couple of such statements made by a member of new religious movements.

“Great significance is attached to the fact that the authors of the statements, who positions himself as an Orthodox believer and occupies a high post of the Chair of the Expert Council for State Religion Studies Expert Opinion of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation, allows himself to use in relation to other religious confessions and religious organizations officially registered in the territory of the Russian Federation phrases and statements that are insulting to them. Moreover, it is done in a rude way in the most popular TV shows, in public lectures and printed editions, which without doubt harms the development of civil society in our country. Thus Alexander Dvorkin actually makes inter-religious relations in the Russian Federation more tense, which is directly provided for in the art. 282 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.” – S.K. Komkov (expert of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Doctor of Law, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences)²⁸

“EXPERT” COUNCIL OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

Despite all Dvorkin's efforts since 1992, his activity had not given any significant results. At that time already Dvorkin started to seek to limit the activities of “sects” by law. It could be said that he saw the first real fruits in 2008, when the anti-extremism law started to be used for suppression of religious freedom; and he triumphed when he was “elected” the head of the Expert Council for Religion Studies Expert Opinion of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation. Now that it is possible, Alexander Dvorkin never fails to sign his title of the chair of the expert council of the Ministry of Justice. Having high authority, Dvorkin provides allegedly true information on sects to federal authorities and hurts feelings of believers on behalf of the State.

²⁷ *Take Care: a Sect movie (part 1)*, 2003

²⁸ This is a quote from an expertise by S.K. Komkov *On the Results of a Cultural Studies Examination of Statements by A. Dvorkin concerning Activities of Religious Organizations in the Russian Federation Made in Mass Media (Shows on NTV, Russia TV Channel, 1st TV Channel), Public Lectures and Printed Editions*, 2010

The very idea that this person was elected the chair of the expert council due to his qualities as a professional and background seems absurd. The appointment may be ascribed to the fact that in the 2000s the Minister of Justice Alexander Konovalov was Dvorkin's student at the Orthodox St. Tikhon Humanitarian University, as well as to his open affection to the Orthodox Faith and support of "anti-sect" organizations.

In 2007, for instance, a report *General Preconditions of Appearance of Cultic and Neopagan Practices in Modern Russia* was presented on behalf of Konovalov at a FECRIS conference in Hamburg (Dvorkin presented the report).²⁹ And in May 2009 the greeting of Alexander Dvorkin was read at a conference of FECRIS by Sergey Milushkin, the then head of the Department for Noncommercial



Alexander Konovalov and Alexander Dvorkin (in the middle of the second row) with leaders of FECRIS. St. Petersburg, 16 May 2009

Organizations. Alexander Konovalov arrived in person the next day. Deputy Minister of Justice Alexey Velichko also spoke at the conference with the report *The Possibilities of Coordinating European and Russian Experience in Opposing Totalitarian Sects*.³⁰

Such an involvement of the Ministry of Justice into the artificially set-up "problem of sects" demonstrates the fact that there is someone who continues to insist that such problem exists. This is the person who feeds officials with lie and the data that "sects" are really a problem of State level. The Ministry of Justice itself hardly needs that.

However as Alexander Dvorkin managed to take the post of the chair of the expert council, let's make a most elementary analysis and see his qualification for holding the post.

The order #53 *On the State Religion Studies Opinion* of the Ministry of Justices has it:

"The council is formed from the officials, State officials, religion studies scholars, specialists in the field of relations between the State and religious associations, whose inclusion is a subject of coordination."

²⁹ "General Preconditions of Appearance of Cultic and Neopagan Practices in Modern Russia" (<http://www.fecris.org>)

³⁰ http://www.ansobor.ru/news.php?news_id=355

Dvorkin is neither an officer nor a State official. However strange it may be to some people, Dvorkin is not a religion studies scholar either. Dvorkin does not have any official scientific degree in the sphere of religion studies, and he is called not a "religion studies scholar", but a "sect studies scholar", who teaches at the chair of "sect studies" of one of the Orthodox universities. Dvorkin can't be called a specialist in the sphere of relations between the State and religious associations either, for he is incapable of having any relations with religious organizations at all, moreover he contributes to demolition of these relations with authorities.

"In our civilized society a council for State religion expert opinions is created, which has only one scholar, Igor Yablokov, professor of the Moscow State University. The rest of the Council members are not religion studies scholars either by their education or activity. But the most surprising thing is that it is headed by a totally odious figure, that of Alexander Dvorkin, who calls himself Doctor of Philosophy, but such a scientific degree does not exist, there is a degree of Doctor of Philosophic Sciences. There is no such a specialization as "sect studies scholar" in the nomenclature of the Supreme Attestation Commission; it's not a scientific, it's an anti-scientific "field". However he is the head of the chair of sect studies of the St. Tikhon University who has a diploma signed by Patriarch Alexy II, not by the President of the Supreme Attestation Commission of the Russian Federation." – E.S. Elbakyan (Doctor of Philosophic Sciences, professor, religion studies scholar)³¹

Now let's examine the rules of creating expert opinions. The order of the Ministry of Justice says about it:

"Expert opinions are based on the principles of observance of freedom of conscience and religious freedom, other human and civil rights and freedoms in accordance with the generally recognized principles and provisions of international law and the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the rights of religious organizations, as well as independence of the religion expert and objective, extensive and complete character of the studies."

Having the data that are already known about Dvorkin, we can extrapolate on what principles his expert opinion will be based. Let's consider Dvorkin's statements in accordance with above mentioned rules:

"...Observance of freedom of conscience and religious freedom..."

"Actually we are against Falun Gong, for we are for genuine truth, kindness and patience. For there is no truth beyond Christ; and ignorant charlatan Li Hongzhi, who declares himself to be the personification of the truth, is more likely a personification of a falsehood." – A.L. Dvorkin³²

"... Other human and civil rights and freedoms in accordance with the generally recognized principles and provisions of international law and the Constitution of the Russian Federation..."

³¹ <http://www.newsru.com/religy/22may2009/konovalov.html>, 22 May 2009.

³² Report *Destructive Sect Falun Gong: the Science of Political Manipulations* by A.L. Dvorkin at the XVI International Christmas Educational Readings, 30 January 2008 (<http://www.iriney.ru/sects/falun/news008.htm>)

"As of today, New Pentecostals is the biggest danger. In fact, it's an absolutely, so to say, new version of Christianity: worldly Christianity, a substitute of Christianity, wherein something else is presented to us under the name of Christianity. And in this regard it poses a great, great danger." – A.L. Dvorkin³³

"Scientology, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Hare Krishna, New Pentecostals (God's Embassy, Alive Faith, New Generation, etc.), adepts of Anastasia, Vissarion, Ivanov, Sahaja Yoga, Brahma Kumaris, Falun Gong can be quoted as examples of totalitarian sects." – A.L. Dvorkin³⁴

"... The rights of religious organizations..."

"But the whole life of the founder of the sect [The International Society for the Consciousness of Krishna], which has acquired one of the most criminal reputations for 35 years of its existence, is an illustration of one of his overpowering passions that is absorbing him, that of his irrepressible ambition originating in an uncontrollable, truly devilish pride. Suffice to look at his photo (that can be found in any Hare Krishna edition) and it will be obvious." – A.L. Dvorkin³⁵

"This, of course, is noxious. [On opening of a Church of Scientology in Moscow] It's a sort of a center of cancer tumor amidst our country and in the center of Moscow. Therefore everything possible must be done in order to prevent it." – A.L. Dvorkin³⁶

"...As well as independence of the religion expert..."

"Traditional Christian confessions are creative; their members seek to be beneficial to the society, country, people. What creative labor are members of totalitarian sects are capable of beside begging in the streets for many hours – and only for their sect?" – A.L. Dvorkin³⁷

"When you come to an Orthodox Church, we see all sorts of people there... there are people who need help, they come and get this help. But sects do not help anybody." – A.L. Dvorkin³⁸

"Not every sect is heretic, for we call a heresy the teaching that split off Christianity, it's a distortion of Christianity. And if a teaching is non-Christian at all,

³³ Lecture *On Sects and More* by A.L. Dvorkin, Lugansk, 1 October 2009

³⁴ On-line conference in Lugansk, 2 October 2009 (<http://www.iriney.ru/sects/theory/027.htm>)

³⁵ A.L. Dvorkin, *Sects Studies. Totalitarian Sects*, 3rd edition revised and supplemented. Printing house of the St. Prince Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood, Nizhny Novgorod, 2002, 816 pages

³⁶ 3rd TV Channel, *Russian Viewpoint* show, 2006

³⁷ A.L. Dvorkin *How to Protect Yourself and Your Loved Ones from Totalitarian Sects*. Moscow, Martyr Grand Princess Elizabeth Sisterhood, 2006, 160 p., circulation: 10,000 copies.

³⁸ *Take Care: a Sect* movie, part 3, 2003

then it is not a heretic one. Therefore, in order to become heretics, they have to work long and diligently and increase their level. That's even worse than a heresy." – A.L. Dvorkin³⁹

"... And objective, extensive and complete character of the studies."

"Who is Krishna? Well, Krishna, so to say, taken historically, it's a kind of a divinity, a shepherds' god, one of the many gods of Indian polytheism. It is now represented pictorially as a fattish cyanotic youth, very effeminate. The name "Krishna" translated from Sanskrit means "dark" or "black", in short, color of a storm cloud, dark lily. Well, once more, the name is very self-explanatory. Therefore, I think, it would be correct to say... we won't be mistaken if we say that, from the Orthodox viewpoint, Krishna is one of demons." – A.L. Dvorkin⁴⁰

"But sects do not produce anything. Who do we know? What sectarians do we know? Street beggars? Pesky recruiters who knock at our doors? Maybe we know some philosopher who is a Jehovah's Witness? Or any Scientologist thinker? Or some wonderful doctor who is a New Pentecostal? Or anything else? We can enumerate for a long time and we won't enumerate anything, because sects do not produce, they elude systems due to their nature. They need to, so to say, sponge on the society." – A.L. Dvorkin⁴¹

The above are not quotes directly from Dvorkin's expert opinion, but they give a good understanding of what approach is used by Dvorkin in assessing the activity of a non-Orthodox religious organization.

Dvorkin's appointment to the Council (especially his "election" as a chair), as well as religious extremism speculations had serious repercussions in Russia as well as abroad. International human rights and religious organizations and Western officials were concerned with that. For example, on 6 July 2010 twenty-eight leaders of religious and human rights organizations sent their address to the US Senate, which said in particular:

"The appointment of renowned "anti-cultists" and controversial scholars to the Council provoked an unprecedented outcry from many religious representatives and human rights defenders. In coordination with the Expert Religious Studies Council, local authorities and low-level courts are instigating cases that create an increasingly hostile environment for "non-traditional" religions, and result in investigations, armed raids, nationwide bans on certain religious literature that has been published and read worldwide for decades, and even dissolutions and liquidations of religious organizations."

Here are some of the signees: Secretary General of Human Rights Watch South Asia, Executive Director of the North American Religious Liberty Association, President of the International Coalition for Religious Freedom, Founder and Chairman of the Board of the

³⁹ Lecture by A. L. Dvorkin at the Novosibirsk Humanitarian Institute, 10 March 2010

⁴⁰ *Take Care: a Sect* movie, part 4, 2003

⁴¹ *Take Care: a Sect* movie, part 3, 2003

Institute on Religion and Public Policy, President of the International Center for Religion & Diplomacy, and others.

Further, on 13 October 2010 an address was sent on behalf of the Congress to a Consul of the Russian Federation in the USA expressing anxiety of religious organizations and public funds related to the abuse of the anti-extremism laws and election of anti-cultists to the Council of the Ministry of Justice. The address was signed by twelve US Congressmen.

Moreover, in 2008 the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom noted that there were significant difficulties with realizing religious freedom in Russia. And in 2009, after Dvorkin's appointment to the Council, Russia ranked as one of the lowest in the rating of religious freedom, side by side with such countries as Turkey, Nigeria, Somali, Afghanistan, China, Iran, Iraq, Turkmenistan, Byelorussia, and others.⁴²

"By the way, if we speak about new religious movements and current religious situation in Russia, I can't but express my indignation about the fact that the Expert Council for State Religion Expert Opinions of the Ministry of Justice is chaired by odious activist of the anti-sectarian movement Alexander Dvorkin, who, to my mind, must be brought to court for inciting religious strife." – A.A. Panchenko (Doctor of Philosophical Sciences)⁴³

DVORKIN'S LIES

Dvorkin ordinarily does not bother to demonstrate the documents to confirm his data. And for representatives of religious organizations it is virtually impossible to get on their air in order to disprove the falsities being spread about them. They are unwelcome at Dvorkin's lectures and seminars. Therefore objective information cannot be provided, and nobody can ask Dvorkin to give evidence of his words.

Sometimes the lie is so enormous that it cannot be missed.

"...The New Pentecostal sectarian movement, to which, according to my calculations, some 300,000 people belong in Russia... A quarter of the adepts commit suicide attempts! A quarter of New Pentecostal adepts." – A.L. Dvorkin⁴⁴

Studying official statistics we can see that there are no more than 40,000 suicides in Russia each year, and religious organizations have never been in the risk group. The suicides can also be distributed according to the region, and a great concentration of them can be found in the regions where there have never been so many New Pentecostals.

"I wonder how I persecute New Pentecostals?.. By telling the truth on New Pentecostals? What does so called persecution have to do with that? I tell the truth so that people may think and choose themselves." – A.L. Dvorkin⁴⁵

⁴² <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf>

⁴³ <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=news&id=70964&type=view>, June 2009

⁴⁴ RenTV, *Evening with Tigran Keosayan* show, topic: sectarians, March 2007

⁴⁵ *Take Care: a Sect* movie, part 3, 2003

"[Hare Krishna] is no doubt a totalitarian sect with a criminal background, which any mafia can envy... drug trafficking, arms trafficking, rapes of minors, murders – and what don't they have in their past."⁴⁶

How often do you learn from press that worshipers of Krishna committed a murder, raped a minor, sold drugs or arms? If they really did it so well that "any mafia can envy", Dvorkin's opinion would be shared by law enforcement bodies.

Here's what Dvorkin wrote in Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper in 2007,

"In 2001 a member of the Moscow ashram raped a 11-year old girl during a month; in Tuva a person who called himself an adept of Krishna cut the head off an Orthodox priest." – A.L. Dvorkin⁴⁷

However when after the publication a petition was filed in the law enforcement bodies and he had to account for his words, Dvorkin said to the investigator of the Prosecutor's Office (a quote from the minutes),

"At present I do not have proven data that leaders or members of the Society for Consciousness of Krishna in Moscow City committed any criminal (unlawful) acts. I ask to stop the check and not bother me with summons to the investigator." – A.L. Dvorkin⁴⁸

Here's what Alexander Nezhny, publicist, member of the Union of Writers of Russia, writes about Dvorkin:

"Dvorkin was about the first in our Fatherland to face sectarians with a horrible accusation of rapes. He was the first to denunciate them in an infernal craving for murders. And, finally, he was the first to penetrate into the innermost of all these Witnesses, Hare Krishna, Moonies, Mormons – into their bloodcurdling scheme of a coup d'état in Russia with the purpose of seizing power. Meanwhile in all that Dvorkin and his associates are telling far and wide, there is no a word of truth. He lies placing on himself a crown of thorns of a political emigrant... He lies declaring our Law on Freedom of Conscience of 1998 to be a copy of an American law, just because there is no such a law in the USA. He lies telling the stunned society about 250,000 broken sectarian families. I phoned to the officer of the [General] Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation who allegedly had such data. He referred me to Nikolay Antonovich Trofimchik, the head of the chair of religion studies of the Academy of State Service. The professor answered that no such statistics existed and Dvorkin "made this up". He lies by accusing Jehovah's Witnesses, the Society for the Consciousness of Krishna, the Unification Church, the Church of Scientology and other religious associations of crimes against personality and state security. No single fact, no single criminal case, just

⁴⁶ RenTV, *Evening with Tigran Keosayan* show, topic: sectarians, March 2007

⁴⁷ Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper, 21 May 2007 (<http://kp.ru/daily/23905/67474/>)

⁴⁸ Explanations by A.L. Dvorkin of 12 February 2008, materials of check #53 conducted by Investigation Department for the Northern Administrative District of the Investigatory Office of the Investigatory Committee of the Prosecutor's Office of Moscow City.

wretched and base fabrication." – Alexander Nezhny (author, publicist, member of the Union of Writers of Russia)⁴⁹

The quote from the description of the court hearing between Dvorkin and Yakunin from 1997:

"Dvorkin could not produce foreign court decisions (and only court decisions are real proofs for a court, not newspaper articles rendering court decisions) that would prove his statements on viciousness of other beliefs, because such court decisions just do not exist... Materials from the Internet translated by the Patriarchy and bearing the seal of the Patriarchy alone were used as evidence." – priest Yakov Krotov (publicist, priest of the Ukrainian autocephalous Orthodox Church)⁵⁰

Answering the question on the number of sects in Russia, Dvorkin likes to repeat the same thing, "If we speak about major sects... they are about eighty, if we speak about minor sects... I think there are thousands of them." To the question about the number of people in the "sects" he answers, "...Very roughly, let's say, from 600 to 800 thousand... Similar sects, but without religious context, may involve, possibly, a couple of thousand more people."⁵¹

Dvorkin writes on criminality of these sects as follows:

"Looking at particular sects, one can see that nearly every one of them brings a long trail of violence, offenses and crimes, including the gravest ones." – A.L. Dvorkin⁵²

While, in reality "looking at particular sects" one can see the following:

"I inform you that no data on committing unlawful acts by leaders and members of the Moscow Society for the Consciousness of Krishna or on persons who suffered from their acts have been found in the Department of the Criminal Search of the Criminal Police of the Department of Interior Affairs for the Northern Administrative District of Moscow City." – A.N. Zaytsev, lieutenant colonel of police, head of the Department of the Criminal Search of the Criminal Police of the Department of Interior Affairs for the Northern Administrative District of Moscow City⁵³

TEACHERS AND LESSONS

To become a "sect studies scholar" Dvorkin had to primarily take the experience of foreign "specialists" and cooperate with those who had already proven to be good at it. Mainly these people used methods more or less similar to those that Dvorkin is using now.

⁴⁹ <http://www.vav.ru/vav/vpp/p3-2.html>

⁵⁰ <http://krotov.info/yakov/dnevnik/1998/19980611.html>

⁵¹ Russia 1 TV Channel, *Special Correspondent* show, *Plays with the Devil* story, May 2010

⁵² A.L. Dvorkin "Sect studies. Totalitarian Sects", 3rd edition revised and supplemented. Printing house of the St. Prince Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood, Nizhny Novgorod, 2002, 816 pages

⁵³ Official letter on 27 #08/2-456 on 27 February 2008, taken from materials of check #53 conducted by Investigation Department for the Northern Administrative District of the Investigatory Office of the Investigatory Committee of the Prosecutor's Office of Moscow City.

It is important to know who they are, what experience was shared by them with Dvorkin and what he is teaching his colleagues now.

Alexander Korelov



"To be frank, I don't care about their sectarian denomination. All sects should be eliminated."
– Alexander Korelov⁵⁴

He is Dvorkin's attorney. He heads the legal committee of Dvorkin's organization. He often participates in discussions about sects and speaks for mass media. Some of his statements are given below.

"That the lousy JW sect [Jehovah's Witnesses] is an extremist organization is a fact that everybody knows... So, our common task is to destroy the American sectarian pest,"⁵⁵

"Human rights activist" Lev Ponomarev was beaten. That serves him right... The more time elapses since the USSR, the more you understand how right was leadership of the country of that time. And now it would be good to send all this dissident riffraff to construction sites."

...

"Moscow Helsinki group backs up the most abhorrent totalitarian sects, Sodomite organizations, and in essence massively corrupts children and the youth. In comparison with leaders of the organization Chikatilo [serial maniac killer] is just an angel."⁵⁶

This person represents interests of "sectarianism victims" in law enforcement bodies and courts. He is a law councilor of Dvorkin.

⁵⁴ http://kuraev.ru/index.php?option=com_smf&Itemid=63&topic=1174.msg16729#msg16729

⁵⁵ http://kuraev.ru/index.php?option=com_smf&Itemid=63&topic=304116.msg3743447#msg3743447

⁵⁶ <http://alex-korelov.livejournal.com/1736.html>

Evgeny Mukhtarov



“Where could New Pentecostals pastors, who were mainly recruited from vocational school rubbish in the first years of perestroika, have taken knowledge on the structure of the national court system?” – Evgeny Mukhtarov⁵⁷

He is a member of the “expert” council of the Ministry of Justice. He is the personal biographer and representative of Dvorkin, who performs his duties with all diligence.

“Oleg, can’t you catch on it at the first attempt? Dual citizenship was cancelled in the country. From 2001 ALD [A.L. Dvorkin] is a full-fledged citizen of Russia... The second passport is valid only in the territory of the USA. Do you understand it or not? I’ll say by syllables: in the ter-ri-to-ry of the USA. You’d better less knock your head against ringing cedars [allusion to the name of a religious movement], then you would possibly not give such remarks.” – Evgeny Mukhtarov⁵⁸

In 1996 in Yaroslavl, Mukhtarov founded anti-cultist Civil Security public center. The address of the fund in the Internet was as follows: rusCAN.narod.ru⁵⁹. Andrey Vasilchenko was one of the leaders of the center. He is also a member of the “expert” council of the Ministry of Justice now.

“Civil Security center conducts its activity in close coordination with other Russian ant-sect organizations, first of all St. Iriney of Leon Information and Consultation Center headed by... Alexander Dvorkin.” – from the website rusCAN.narod.ru

On the same website you can find the information that in 1994 Andrey Vasilchenko together with Evgeny Mukhtarov founded the League of Patriotic Youth public fund, which was the first to conduct anti-cult work in the Yaroslavl Region.

“The League of Patriotic Youth was the initiator of development and adoption of a regional law that regulates the activity of sects and foreign missionaries, and at that time was one of the first to sign a collective letter to the members of the State Duma and the Federation Council with a bid to vote for the new law draft On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations.” – from the website rusCAN.narod.ru

⁵⁷ <http://evgeny-mukhtarov.livejournal.com/>

⁵⁸ http://kuraev.ru/index.php?option=com_smf&Itemid=63&topic=5483.msg87532

⁵⁹ The website was closed; it can be found in the Internet archive <http://web.archive.org>

That's what Mukhtarov himself says about the League,

"At the time the League let such people as you empty the bowels well, and three fourth of it are now either in the Mayor's office, or in the Regional legislature, or in the White House. The process of fusion of carriers of correct ideas with the authorities was more than successful." – Evgeny Mukhtarov⁶⁰

That's what Mukhtarov said in his Internet blog and the public forum of the Yaroslavl City:

"Some bastard under the nick 'Outsider' proposed to the members of forum.anastasia.ru to knock together some sort of a virtual troupe".

[...]

"PS. I wish I found him and thrashed the hell out of him."⁶¹

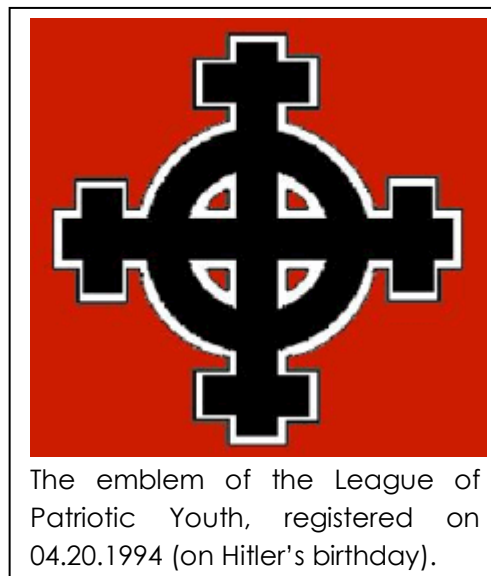
An expert of the Ministry of Justice uses in public discussions the following phrases:

"My "problem" does not get into your mouth." – Evgeny Mukhtarov⁶²

And to make everybody understand once and for all that Mukhtarov does not make groundless statements, he said,

"Remember just in case: if I say something, I can prove it with documents. And therefore don't suck, or your cheeks will grow blue and inflated."⁶³

On 2 April 2008 Dvorkin issued to E.O. Mukhtarov a power of attorney for the term of three years with the rights as follows: "To sign a suit application, file it in court [...] with the right to file any other documents, including complaints, a cassation complaint, a surveillance complaint, making challenges and applications [...] perform other procedural acts. Besides, to file any statements on my behalf, sign for me and perform any actions related to the task."⁶⁴



⁶⁰ <http://yarportal.ru/topic24021.html?view=findpost&p=535547>

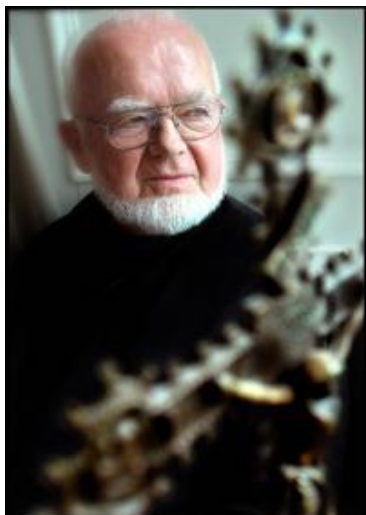
⁶¹ <http://evgeny-muhtarov.livejournal.com/>

⁶² <http://yarportal.ru/topic24021s255.html?#entry538358>

⁶³ <http://yarportal.ru/topic24021.html?view=findpost&p=540596>

⁶⁴ Power of attorney #40-01/046269 of 04.02.2008, Kaluga City, notary I.N. Kravchenko.

Johannes Aagaard



"I'm sure that because of what in a very nasty way I'll call your First Amendment⁶⁵ neurosis, you have to think like you do. You are bound by that funny sort of First Amendment thinking. It is totally foreign to us, simply not in our blood." – Johannes Aagaard⁶⁶

Johannes Aagaard is a Danish "sect studies scholar", inspirer of Alexander Leonidovich Dvorkin, with whom the latter communicated and collaborated closely. Johannes Aagaard founded the first anti-cult organization in Denmark, the International Dialog Center, which further opened its chapters in five European countries, including Russia and Germany, where it is represented by Alexander Dvorkin and Thomas Gandow⁶⁷, respectively. Dvorkin was also vice-president of the Dialog Center.

"In August [1993] on the invitation of the professor I first visited Denmark, the Dialog Center founded by him and got acquainted with his "dialogue in confrontation from a Christian standpoint" doctrine, worked in the "gurubrary" (the library of sect and anti-sect literature) of the Center, and saw the Center function. Thus the Center of St. Iriney of Leon was born. In that regard my meeting with professor Aagaard became providential." – A.L. Dvorkin⁶⁸

Aagaard started his anti-cult activity in 1973 and closely collaborated with other similar international organizations, with CAN (Cult Awareness Network)⁶⁹ and AFF (American Family Foundation)⁷⁰ among them. Both organization specialized in deprogramming⁷¹ and taught members of other anti-cult organizations this method.⁷² For instance, two AFF disciples, who

⁶⁵ The First Amendment to the United States Constitution ratified on 1791. The amendment prohibits the making of any law "respecting an establishment of religion", impeding the free exercise of religion, infringing on the freedom of speech, infringing on the freedom of the press and some others.

⁶⁶ *Cultic Studies Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1993

⁶⁷ See information on Thomas Gandow below.

⁶⁸ <http://www.iriney.ru/sects/theory/014.htm>

⁶⁹ CAN is a US organization that specialized in deprogramming and got bankrupt under the burden of large fines imposed on it as a result of court suits of its victims. Ted Patrick, the founder of the organization and "father of deprogramming", was sentenced to prison.

⁷⁰ A US anti-cult organization (now called "ICSA"), which practiced and openly supported deprogramming.

⁷¹ Deprogramming is a method of driving a person out of a religious organization through physical violence. Usually the person is kidnapped and then pressed and forced.

⁷² <http://www.cesnur.org/2001/CAN1/index.htm>

were practicing deprogramming in Spain, were confronted with suits of seven victims, which resulted with enormous fines for the deprogrammers.

In the beginning of 1970s AFF was a chapter of CAN and now is a separate organization called ICSA (International Cultic Studies Association) and a member of FECRIS, a anti-cult organization, with Dvorkin serving as its vice-president.

Alexander Dvorkin has closer connections with AFF and similar organizations than it might appear at first glance. Enquiring into that, one can find out that in 2001 Alexander Dvorkin participated at an AFF conference in New York, where anti-cult activists who were sympathetic with or active in deprogramming were present (Claire Champollion⁷³, Michael Langone⁷⁴, Friedrich Griess⁷⁵, Daphne Vane⁷⁶, Steven Hassan⁷⁷, and others). Alexander Dvorkin participated in such conferences in 2003, 2005 and 2006. At present some of the aforementioned people, as well as other deprogrammers, participate in the activity of FECRIS.

Let's turn back to Aagaard. To show the similarity of the views of Alexander Dvorkin and those of his teacher, see a quote from a 1991 article on "sects" by Johannes Aagaard published in Cultic Studies Journal edited by AFF:

"Mind-bending and soul-killing take place all over, and yet there are not laws against it. Under the cover of religious freedom a deadly permissiveness has crept in. This is especially so in the United States, where the "First Amendment" is used to support all manner of evil exploitation in the name of religion. Anyone who pretends to be religious or runs something even faintly related to religion is considered virtually outside the law. The worst aspects of medieval ecclesiastic policy in Europe have, for all practical purposes, come back to the United States: the contention that religions are exempted from the claims of law." – Johannes Aagaard⁷⁸

⁷³ See information on Claire Champollion below.

⁷⁴ Michael D. Langone (USA): the Executive Director of ICSA (former AFF). In 1995 he received an award for his "merits" from CAN. He openly promoted deprogramming (in his book *Recovery from Cults: Help for Victims of Psychological and Spiritual Abuse*, inclusively).

⁷⁵ Friedrich Griess (Austria): former President of FECRIS.

⁷⁶ Daphne Vane: one of the founders and activists of FAIR (Families Action Information Resource), a British anti-cult organization, which was founded and worked with assistance of CAN.

⁷⁷ See information on Hassan below.

⁷⁸ Cultic Studies Journal, Vol. 8, №2, 1991 (<http://www.cesnur.org/2001/CAN1/index.htm>)

Thomas Gandow



"We see how totalitarian sects use organizational and structural weaknesses of young democratic states in order to get established in them and enforce their system of values upon the peoples that have just got rid of political totalitarianism." – Thomas Gandow (from his speech at the parliament hearings in the State Duma of the Russian Federation, 1995)⁷⁹

He is a good friend of Alexander Dvorkin and often comes to Russia in order to participate in anti-cult conferences and other events.

"But in this very situation it turned out we had a lot like-minded friends. People came to support me as an author of the book, for instance... Doctor of Divinity **Johannes Aagaard**; professor **Claire Champollion**, a representative of the French anti-cult committee; and pastor **Thomas Gandow**, sect commissioner of the Berlin-Brandenburg Evangelical Lutheran church." – A.L. Dvorkin⁸⁰

Gandow, like Dvorkin, was vice-president of the International Dialog Center and the director of its branch in Germany. He is a member of FECRIS. He spoke at the FECRIS conference in St. Petersburg in 2009. In 2010 he has already come to Russia and CIS countries several times: he gave a lecture on "sects" to students in Ryazan⁸¹, and here's a quote from his speech in the Minsk Academy of Sciences:

"Unfortunately, the concept of *Church* is not protected by any legal means, therefore it is used by anybody in any way. For instance, I know that New Life New Pentecostal organization works in Belarus. There are similar ones in Europe. But they have long since been categorized as a sectarian group. It's not so here yet." – Thomas Gandow, May 2010⁸²

However Gandow's objectivity and good judgment on the subject came into question when it was revealed that he himself in the 70s had been a member of the left-extreme group "League against Imperialism"⁸³ (a front-group for the German Communist Party)⁸⁴, which was classified as an anti-democratic group by German secret services as they were ready to use violence in their fight to turn former West Germany into a Communist state. The Office for

⁷⁹ <http://www.iriney.ru/books/moon/014.htm>

⁸⁰ A.L. Dvorkin *Teachers and Lessons. Memories, Stories, Speculations.* – Nizhny Novgorod, Khristianskaya Biblioteka (Christian Library) Publishing House, 2009, 384 p.

⁸¹ <http://mediaryazan.ru/articles/detail/23676.html>

⁸² <http://news.21.by/politics/2010/05/27/61740.html>

⁸³ Don't confuse it with the Anti-Imperialistic League that existed before World War Two and was disbanded in 1937. These are different organizations. The league in point acted in 1970s and strongly upheld Communist ideas.

⁸⁴ <http://www.lermanet.com/cisar/survey/uc.htm>

Protection of the Constitution warned in 1975 already that the League against Imperialism publicly announced that they only could reach their goals through the use of violence and there were several violent clashes between police and members of the League in the 70s.

At that time the International League against Imperialism hooked up to Mao Zedong⁸⁵ – dictator and leader of the Communist Party of China – and supported the Communist takeover in Cambodia in the 70s. Later Cambodia under the Communist leader Pol Pot experienced one of the worst genocides since World War Two when the Communists killed millions off their own population. It is estimated that at least one fourth of the population of Cambodia died under terrible circumstances during the four years of the horror regime (1975-1979) under Pol Pot.

Gandow does not deny his affiliation with the League. The most disgusting thing is that Gandow and his colleagues admired Communist dictators, who were notorious for their massacres. Not only they felt sympathy with the leader of the Communist Party of Cambodia, which had killed brutally up to 3 million people marked by the regime (all that was already common knowledge at that time), but they were also spreading their ideas in West Germany.

After the League's dissolution in 1980 Gandow did not stop to propagate Communist ideas. For instance, in 1986 his picture could be found in the book *The Heavenly Soldiers*, which he praised and referred to. This book was mainly leveled at the Unification Church and was published by the military publishing house of East Germany. The book contains propaganda a lá Communist Party, which does not accept any religions whatsoever. What does a pastor of the Lutheran Church have to do with the anticlerical circles?

Later, when Gandow took up anti-cult activity seriously, his Communist views vented not only verbally. Gandow started to uphold severe deprogramming methods. Here's a statement under oath made in 1990 by one of Gandow's victims, whom he subjected to deprogramming in her pregnancy and who later lost her baby.

"Statement under oath. I am Andrea Klama, born on 02.10.1956, live at the address: Nogatstrasse 50, 1000, Berlin, 44. [...] I wanted to go out of the house at Nogatstrasse 50, 1000, Berlin, 44, but was stopped by two men, who went out of a car, showed me a document that looked like an official certificate and said to me, "Come with us, we have to clarify something." They forced me to get into the car. [...] I told them to stop immediately, otherwise I would break the window. One of them said, "Calm down, baby. Your family has collected some information on you." It was given to my family by my enemy, who said I was not quite sane, that I refused from my child and that the simplest way out for my family was to place me for psychiatric treatment and to entice my child, my daughter, into a children's home..." [...] Then we turned on Haimat street and stopped near house 27. I read at the entrance the sign "Bureau of Pastor Gandow". My sister, my brother-in-law and my former husband were waiting for me there. They told me I should go upstairs and talk to pastor Gandow. I said I was not interested in it. So, my former husband said that that same evening the child would

⁸⁵ Mao Zedong: the head of the Communist Party of China from 1943 up to death in 1976. He became notorious with his terror policy after several large campaigns in which several million people were killed. He left the country to his successor in a deep crisis.

disappear. [...] He came not more than in five minutes. He said, "Hi, I am pastor Gandow", without extending his hand to me or looking at me. [...] Meanwhile pastor Gandow talked with my former husband in my presence and discoursed on that I could be put into a madhouse for 48 hours under care of doctors and that I would not be able to avoid it. There was a hidden threat in his speech and attempts to suppress my will; he wanted to subdue me and make tractable."

This is just one of those whom Dvorkin calls his associate.

"Pastor Gandow is a great friend of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church. In May 1994 he was a guest of the Department of Religious Education and Catechism of the Moscow Patriarchy and took an active part in the proceedings of the International Christian seminar *Totalitarian Sects in Russia* organized by the Information and Consultation Center of St. Martyr Iriney, Bishop of Leon." – Orthodox portal www.cerkov.ru⁸⁶

Gerald Armstrong



"I'd like to warn beforehand that there is an arrest warrant for me in the USA. [...] I was sentenced to a fine of almost 400,000 dollars. And there is an order to put me in prison." – Gerald Armstrong⁸⁷

This is another good acquaintance of Dvorkin, who attacks the Church of Scientology. He regularly participates in anti-cult conferences, in Russia inclusively, visits FECRIS conferences and other conferences of anti-cult organizations. He has close communication with the lawyer and members of the extremist Anonymous movement, three leaders of which were recently sentenced to prison for organizing crimes against the Church of Scientology.

We could also tell about the picture of naked Armstrong that was made for a newspaper "in order to prove his theory on eliminating all money"; we could tell on his collaboration with the US Internal Revenue Service when he wanted to lay counterfeit



First three: A.L. Dvorkin, G. Armstrong, Thomas Gandow. Ekaterinburg, 2002

⁸⁶ <http://lib.cerkov.ru/authors/1261>

⁸⁷ Armstrong's speech at the conference *Totalitarian Sects: a Threat of the XXI century*, Nizhny Novgorod, April 2001

documents in the Church of Scientology; a lot of things could be told. But all this proves just that Armstrong's mental health is very questionable.

Armstrong even sent a letter to Saddam Hussein during the war in Iraq where he offered Hussein to take him hostage. "If any party does not fulfill any part of the agreement, the other party shall have the right to execute me," Armstrong wrote in the conclusion, giving to understand clearly that he considered this not as a joke, but something very serious.

Claire Champollion



"...Persons who have undergone deprogramming have fewer difficulties in integrating their experience in a cult than those who have left the cult by themselves." – Claire Champollion⁸⁸

Wife of Dr. Guy Champollion, a co-founder of French anti-religious group ADFI (Association for the Defense of Family and Individual). In 1974, Dr. Champollion co-founded ADFI with his friend psychiatrist Andre Badiche, and the organization started its work backed up by CAN⁸⁹.

From 1974 to 1978, Claire Champollion (died in 2003) was responsible for the international public relations of ADFI. During this period, she made a number of trips to the United States, Germany and other European countries in order to coordinate the actions of ADFI with the equivalent anti-religious organizations operating in these countries. In 1978, ADFI hired Alexandra Schmidt, an American student in sociology, as a secretary. In 1982 Alexandra fled France being charged for an attempted deprogramming.

Claire had close contacts with members and leaders of CAN and AFF, deprogrammer organizations. In 1982, Claire Champollion participated in an international conference that took place in Arlington, United States, where the subject of deprogramming was the main one openly discussed.

Failure of ADFI methods can be confirmed by examples such as how an ex-member of a religious minority killed himself in the premises of ADFI in Paris after he had been "helped" to renounce his religious faith – probably labeled as heretic by ADFI. There is also the murder perpetrated by the husband of a member of ADFI who had been convinced that his son-in-law was the guru of some dangerous cult, and shot him to death.

⁸⁸ Taken from an article published in the Journal of ADFI. The title is *Meeting of Arlington – USA*.

⁸⁹ <http://www.cesnur.org/2001/CAN1.htm>

ADFI is a part of FECRIS, an international anti-cult organization, wherein Dvorkin is a vice-president, and is a partner of Dvorkin's Center, which is indicated at the official website of ADFI⁹⁰.

The above are some facts about the activity of Claire Champollion, Dvorkin's associate. Moreover, Claire Champollion spends on it taxpayers' money from the state budget of France. Well, who knows who finances the anti-religious activity in Russia?

Ursula Caberta



"...it was stated in Germany that Scientology works against the free democratic fundamental order of the Federal Republic of Germany. It is a new form of political extremism..." – Ursula Caberta⁹¹

She is an anti-cultist well-known in Europe, an employee of the Ministry of the Interior for the State of Hamburg, in Germany. Ursula Caberta is working actively on suppressing religious freedom. Her main task is to impose limitations on the activities of Scientologists in Germany.

In 1992, subordinated to the Hamburg State Ministry of the Interior, so called "Scientology Task Force" with Ursula Caberta as its head was founded. The group worked solely toward limiting the activities of the Church of Scientology. In particular, Ursula Caberta exerted pressure upon employers so that they did not employ Scientologists, she provided for limitation of Scientologists' access to the Hamburg real estate market and for banks to deny loans to Scientologists. The group issued reports with negative information on Scientology.

Ursula Caberta introduced so called "sect filter" in Germany. It is a document that obliged an applicant to indicate his or her affiliation with any new religious movement before he could be employed. Thus the undesirable (members of new religious movements) were "filtered out" and denied jobs only because of their religious affiliation. A work instruction of 1996 required government staff of local employment agencies and social security offices operated by the Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to mark companies owned by scientologists with the letter "S". Where companies are suspected of having Scientologist staff, prospective employees are alerted to this fact by government staff. Government officials have publicized the names of individual Scientologists and conducted media

⁹⁰ <http://www.unadfi.org>

⁹¹ Report of Ursula Caberta *Activities of the state related to the psycho-market – example Scientology* at FECRIS conference. Hamburg, 2007.

campaigns against their businesses; some business people have placed advertisements in the press saying they are not Scientologists in order to avoid the associated stigma.⁹²

Isn't it a manifestation of fascism?

In 1 October 2010, after numerous complaints and court filings, the ant-Scientology task force was abolished, but Ursula Caberta stays to be a government official and work in the same line.

From 2000 Ursula Caberta was the organizer of the annual Alternative Charlemagne Award⁹³ a satiric replica of official Charlemagne Award existing in Germany. The Charlemagne Award is awarded annually to international figures (such as former President Bill Clinton) who promote European unity and world peace. And Caberta's "award" was given to people who promote religious strife and persecution of religious minorities. For instance, Caberta's prize was given to Alain Vivien (former French governmental official) for his widespread activity aimed at limiting the freedom of religious minorities in France, as well as to Robert Minton, the founder of antireligious "hate group" in the USA, a propagator of Nazism and violence.

Alexander Dvorkin together with other counter-cult activists (such as Gerald Armstrong, Claire Champollion, Thomas Gandow, Friedrich Griess, Johannes Aagaard, Roger Gonnet⁹⁴ and others) was in the committee of the award and took award decisions.⁹⁵

Caberta is also taking part in FECRIS activity:

"We also thank the Arbeitsgruppe Scientology of the Freie und Hansestadt⁹⁶ under the leadership of Mrs. Ursula Caberta for the excellent cooperation in the preparation of the conference and during the conference itself, and for the financial contribution". – Friedrich Griess (president of FECRIS)⁹⁷.



⁹² The use of "sect filter" was finally cancelled in 2008 in a series of court trials initiated by the Church of Scientology.

⁹³ Later the award was named *Leipzig Human Rights Award*. The award was given every year from 2000 to 2004.

⁹⁴ Roger Gonnet is a citizen of France. He was an activist of the anti-religious movement headed by Alain Vivien. While after 9/11 world governments called for peace, Roger Gonnet used the tragedy in order to boost anti-religious and anti-American mood. He participates in the activities of FECRIS (<http://www.religiousfreedomwatch.org/anti-religious-extremists/roger-gonnet/>).

⁹⁵ <http://leipziger-preis.de>

⁹⁶ "Scientology Task Force of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg".

⁹⁷ From preamble of the annual FECRIS conference held in Hamburg on 2007, Friedrich Griess was president of FECRIS at that time. Current president of FECRIS is Thomas Sackville.

Alain Vivien



"Thus a sect is an association of totalitarian nature, which may or may not have religious purposes, whose behavior is aimed at encroaching upon human rights. In France there are religious sects, atheistic sects, commercial sects and even, so to say, healing sects." – Alain Vivien⁹⁸

Dvorkin often sets the French "sect" laws as an example for Russia. In particular Dvorkin refers to someone Alain Vivien.

"Yes, the word "sect" was introduced into legal practice there [in France], conscience manipulation is declared not only an infringement, but a crime, the liability being 3 to 5 years in prison plus a large fine. This law is supplemented with a list of sects dangerous for France, for the society. [...] Alain Vivien has come to our country twice. He is a French minister that deals with the problems of sects. More precisely, his title is the head of the Inter-ministerial Mission for Fighting Sects [it is noted here that now another person heads the agency]. Last time he was present at the conference *Totalitarian Sects: a Threat of the XXI Century* held by our Center and the St. Prince Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood and met our officials, but we are not fast to use this experience. But sooner or later we should arrive at it." – A.L. Dvorkin⁹⁹

Alain Vivien is a person of the same kind as Thomas Gandow, Johannes Aagaard, Alexander Dvorkin, Claire Champollion, and others. The only difference is that he once occupied a state post.

"The organization of struggle against sectarianism is based both on my own experience and on the experience of our foreign partners from, for instance, Germany, Austria, and Belgium. Besides, Orthodox countries help in this very much: Romania, Cyprus, and currently Russia." – Alain Vivien (Nizhny Novgorod, 2001)

Vivien actually did a lot to suppress religious freedom in France. His actions led to a serious limitation of rights of nearly every religious organization in France. After three years of his work (and with millions of Euros spent from the state budget) the results are as follows:¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Alain Vivien's speech at the conference *Totalitarian Sects: a Threat of the XXI century*, Nizhny Novgorod, April 2001

⁹⁹ A.L. Dvorkin *Teachers and Lessons. Memories, Stories, Speculations.* – Nizhny Novgorod, Khristianskaya Biblioteka (Christian Library) Publishing House, 2009, 384 p.

¹⁰⁰ Per information of the web-site www.viviengate.0catch.com

Elimination of freedom of association:

- The law on mental manipulations, voted for by the Parliament, gives the possibility to completely annihilate, for the same futile reasons, any organization that could be considered as putting its members in a state of subservience (i.e. any religious or political organization).

Elimination of freedom of conscience:

- Creation and State funding of a clinic with the aim of "healing" cult members.
- Any minority group that proposes a spiritual, medical, philosophical, political, ecological alternative, and its members, are a priori "suspects" and sometimes bluntly harassed.
- Official discrimination in the work world: members of "cults" are not allowed to occupy certain positions or posts.
- Proposition of the MILS¹⁰¹ to forbid teaching to teachers belonging to a "cult".
- Police and judicial harassment without evidence.

Denouncement upgraded to being a virtue:

- Many people have been harassed because of their "possible" belonging to a "cult", after an anonymous denunciation. For example, teachers having been bothered and transferred on the sole reason of having been "seen entering the premises of a minority religion".
- Yoga groups or other alternative activities harassed by the police because they had been reported to be a "cult".
- Public denouncement of individuals or companies by the MILS in media, on the grounds that they would be "members of a cult" or "close to a cult", etc.

Violation of the rest rights and freedoms which led by freedom of conscience suppression in France:

- Unfounded accusations against individuals and groups that have no signs of being sectarian, leading to collapses or even suicide.
- Use of the "cult" label to get rid of a group or a person considered to be "in the way". Police agencies, ADFI and CCMM¹⁰² have created a kind of virtual yellow star, by opening files and systematic collection of data on religious or political opinions of individuals.

Elimination of freedoms related to education:

- Law on schools enables the government to annihilate any alternative to secular schooling, just on the basis of a mere inspection.
- Harassment and the ill-intended focus against the Steiner schools, for example, targeted of being a cult.

¹⁰¹ MILS: Inter-ministerial Mission Fighting Sects (France) founded in November 1998. Now it is called State Service Miviludes and is headed by Georges Fenech.

¹⁰² CCMM (French abbreviation: Center Against Mental Manipulation): another French anti-cult organization earlier headed by Alain Vivien. After his appointment to MILS he posted his wife as the Executive Director of CCMM.

Isolation of France:

- France, because of its views and methods, has been targeted in reports of international agencies for the protection of human rights (Amnesty International, Helsinki Committee, Annual Report of the US State Department, UNO).

“Everything is allowed” policy:

- Pressure on political personalities, on magistrates, on companies; training sessions given by MILS or ADFI to judges or policemen in professional schools for these professions, so that they may learn how to “judge” cults and their members.
- Mixing up of the judiciary, the executive and the legislative bodies, inside a same entity.

Control of the mass media:

- Direct pressure and threats on media that allow “cults” to express themselves.

One could image what may happen in Russia, should Dvorkin, like Alain Vivien, occupy an influential position in the State power bodies.

Steven Hassan



“The process [of deprogramming] goes as follows. A member of a cult is brought to a secret place that is under constant guard, where he can't stay alone even in the bathroom. Sometimes the windows in the premises are boarded up in order to prevent breaking out. Deprogramming continues for days and even for weeks till the adept shows signs of sudden psychological shift.” – Steven Hassen¹⁰³

He is another cult “expert”. He has visited Russia too. He knows Russian false expert¹⁰⁴ Evgeny Volkov, who translated big part of materials of Hassan into Russian.

The book *10 Questions to an Obtrusive Stranger*¹⁰⁵ by Dvorkin was not actually authored by Dvorkin, but is a translated chapter from *Combating Cult Mind Control* by Hassan.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Steven Hassan. *Releasing the Bonds*. – St. Petersburg, prime-EVROZNAK, 2001, 400 p.

¹⁰⁴ In 2009 he gave an expert opinion declaring Scientology materials to have extremist character without fully having studied the materials and even without using the Law on Counteraction to Extremist Activity. The expert opinion was totally disproved in court.

¹⁰⁵ A.L. Dvorkin *Take Care: a Sect. 10 Questions to an Obtrusive Stranger*. 3rd reviewed ed., suppl. in 2000, 48 p., circulation: 15,000 copies.

¹⁰⁶ Steven Hassan *Combating Cult Mind Control*, Park Street Press, 1990, 256 p.

Hassan is notorious for his repeated deprogramming actions and his support to people who conducted the activity. In one of his books¹⁰⁷ he even tells in detail how deprogramming should be done and gives examples of its application.

Hassan was a consultant of CAN and supports such people as Ted Patrick, father of deprogramming, who was convicted three times and was put in prison for application of these methods. Hassan supported Patrick, saying that the "forced deprogramming" developed by the latter is "the only efficient method" to drive a person from a cult.¹⁰⁸

Hassan himself deprogrammed several times. For example, he participated in one case where three men kidnapped a girl, brought her to a secluded place threatening to break her leg if she cries for help or tries to run away. They held her for 12 days humiliating her and forcing her to read and listen to materials containing criticism of her religion.

Excerpts from a statement under oath made by another victim of Hassan are given below.

"That when I tried to leave, the men gripped me by my arms and threw me on the tile floor. As a result I slammed against the tile floor and got a cut on the inside of my lower lip and bruises on my chin and right cheek bone. Then they tied my hands and brought me into a small room and put me on a cot; there the deprogrammers Ellen Lloyd and Steve Hassan began working in shifts to deprogram me.

"During the first three days of the deprogramming I was tied up all the time and... was not allowed to sleep.

"That when the deprogramming started I decided not to speak to anyone or eat anything and that after two days Steve Hassan threatened to give me a series of shots.

"That during the first three days during Steve's shifts he would insult me and humiliate me as a person... My hands being tied to my back so tightly and for so long time, the circulation was cut off... my right hand was turning a bruise color and was badly swollen.

"That during the first three days, I was escorted to the bathroom while my hands were still tied... the deprogrammers did not allow me to wash or shave my body. That the toilet was a pot that a neighbor helped me urinate into, that due to embarrassment I did not allow myself to defecate."

Below is an excerpt from one of court decision.

"Considering the case the court found that different theories concerning, if you like it, brainwashing, or mental control, or cults, which the experts wanted to apply, were not recognized in the general scientific circles."

[...]

¹⁰⁷ Steven Hassan. *Releasing the Bonds*. – St. Petersburg, prime-EVROZNAK, 2001, 400 p.

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.religiousfreedomwatch.org/religious-experts/false-experts/steven-hassan/>

"By the facts and speculations found in the Fischman case I was led to the conviction that the views of Mr. Hassan, published theories and statements on what is a cult and what isn't, control of conscience, control of thoughts, brainwashing, and whatever falls into this topic, were not accepted as sufficient expert opinions in the scientific circles. Based on that, I revise and cancel his qualification as an expert on cults and issues of mind control." – Presiding Justice Christina Harms.¹⁰⁹

Resume

Only several figures in some way or another connected with Dvorkin are presented.

This list can be continued.

IN CONCLUSION: WHY THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH?

"What I am doing is not my initiative, it's just Church task. Everybody in the Church does his own work, and I have mine too; though, frankly speaking, the work, so to say, of a gong farmer. But somebody has to do that." – A.L. Dvorkin¹¹⁰

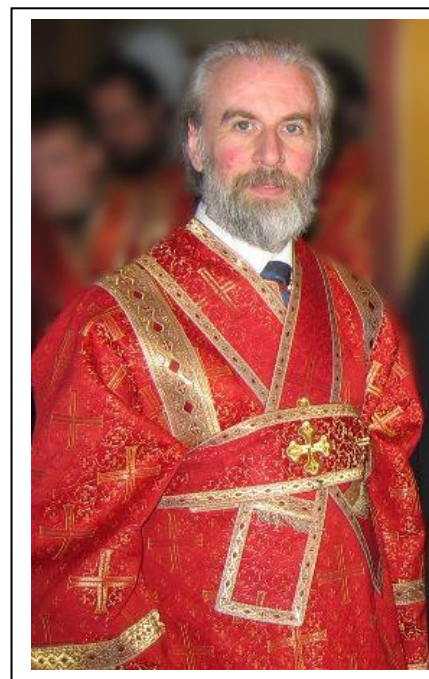
Question: "Is there any department in the Church that opposes sects?"

Andrey Kuraev: "Well, this is, first of all, the center of Alexander Leonidovich Dvorkin – the Center of Iriney of Leon; there are its local chapters, there are associates, colleagues..."¹¹¹

"I express hope that your Center will continue to be a powerful factor for enlightenment of Russian public and its mobilization for countering the threats of totalitarian sects. I wish in my prayer all personnel of the Center further successes in their activity for the sake of the Russian Orthodox Church and our Russian Fatherland. I call God's blessing upon all of you!" – Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexy II (now late)¹¹²

"We are outright against the proselytizing activity performed by Hare Krishna... And if Hare Krishna's activity develops, it will develop a boomerang reaction of the Orthodox.

[...]



¹⁰⁹ Court decision of 03.28.1996, Norfolk (Massachusetts, USA).

¹¹⁰ A.L. Dvorkin *Teachers and Lessons. Memories, Stories, Speculations.* – Nizhny Novgorod, *Khristianskaya Biblioteka (Christian Library)* Publishing House, 2009, 384 p.

¹¹¹ NTV Channel, *Good Monday* show, May 2010.

¹¹² From the letter of the Patriarch Alexy II to A.L. Dvorkin and his personnel with congratulations concerning the 15th anniversary of RATsIRS.



"As Hare Krishna are not a traditional religion. Hare Krishna is a sect created within Hinduism. Therefore the Inter-Religion Council of Russia has no contacts with Hare Krishna, as well as neither does the Russian Orthodox Church; and we are against the proselytizing activity of Hare Krishna in the territory of Russia." – Patriarch Cyril (the then Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, chair of the Department of the External Ecclesiastic Relations of the Moscow Patriarchy)."¹¹³

"The Church is, of course, concerned, but not because it "fights competitors". Sects are by no means "competitors" of the Church; their fight against it is in the public, not ecclesiastical sphere. Modern totalitarian sects are a socially dangerous manifestation, which brings the trail of disrupted human lives, disrupted families... All that makes us to pay attention to them." – A.L. Dvorkin¹¹⁴

We wonder why the Church thinks that "modern totalitarian sects are a socially dangerous manifestation, which brings the trail of disrupted human lives, disrupted families". Is it really the opinion of the Church or just an opinion of one person turned into the opinion of the Church?

Show us "the trail".

REFERENCES

In writing the article materials from the following sources were used:

1. Website <http://www.religiousfreedomwatch-ru.org>
2. A.L. Dvorkin *Teachers and Lessons. Memories, Stories, Speculations*. – Nizhny Novgorod, *Khristianskaya Biblioteka (Christian Library)* Publishing House, 2009, 384 p.
3. A.L. Dvorkin "Sects studies. Totalitarian Sects", 3rd edition revised and supplemented. Printing house of the St. Prince Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood, Nizhny Novgorod, 2002, 816 pages
4. Steven Hassan. *Releasing the Bonds*. – St. Petersburg, prime-EVROZNAK, 2001, 400 p.
5. A.L. Dvorkin *How to Protect Yourself and Your Loved Ones from Totalitarian Sects*. Moscow, Martyr Grand Princess Elizabeth Sisterhood, 2006, 160 p., circulation: 10,000 copies.
6. Other audio, video, printed and electronic materials indicated in the footnotes.

¹¹³ *Religious Sects: Freedom from Conscience* movie, part 4, 2004-2006.

¹¹⁴ <http://panteleimon.info/index.php?newsid=614>